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To: Headmasters and Principals of Residential Schools
Presidents of Colleges / Universities
Directors of School Health
Directors of College Health
Boards of Health
Healthcare Providers

From: Susan M. Lett, M.D., M.P.H, Medical Director, Immunization Program
Division of Epidemiology and Immunization

Date: June 2006

Re: 1) Limited Supply of Meningococcal Vaccines
2) Revised *Information about Meningococcal Disease and Vaccination and Waiver for Students at Residential Schools and Colleges*

You may be aware that there continues to be ongoing supply issues with both meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) and meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine (MPSV4). The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has revised its recommendations for the use of meningococcal vaccine. Until further notice, administration of MCV4 to persons 11 – 12 years of age should be deferred. While MPSV4 is an acceptable alternative to MCV4, please be aware that supplies of MPSV4 are also currently very limited. (CDC. MMWR Dispatch [Vol. 55] May 19, 2006.)

Even with the deferral of vaccination in the 11 – 12 year old age group, it may still be difficult to obtain adequate supplies of meningococcal vaccine for those students for whom meningococcal vaccination is required under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, s.15D and related Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) regulations (105 CMR 220.700).

Due to the limited supply of both types of meningococcal vaccine, the MDPH has revised its *Information about Meningococcal Disease and Vaccination and Waiver for Students at Residential Schools and Colleges* to include an option for students (or their parent/legal guardian) to select they were unable to be vaccinated due to the shortage of meningococcal

vaccines. Students unvaccinated because of the shortage may want to consider being immunized once supplies improve and if they are still at increased risk of meningococcal disease. Schools and universities that offer immunizations may wish to create a recall system so that those students may receive meningococcal vaccine when it is available.

The manufacturer anticipates that the supply of MCV4 will improve slightly by the fall of 2006. However, an increase in MCV4 availability sufficient for vaccination of all of the recommended groups is not anticipated until 2008.

Please refer to the attached document *Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements 2006* for more information regarding school immunization requirements and meningococcal disease and vaccination.

For more information, please contact the MDPH Division of Epidemiology and Immunization at 617-983-6800 or toll free at 888-658-2850. For an electronic version of the revised *Information about Meningococcal Disease and Vaccination and Waiver for Students at Residential Schools and Colleges*, please visit <http://www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/epii/imm/imm.htm#school>.

Enclosures

Information about Meningococcal Disease and Vaccination and Waiver for Students at Residential Schools and Colleges (Updated June 2006)

MMWR Dispatch: Limited Supply of Meningococcal Vaccine, Recommendation to Defer Vaccination of Persons Aged 11 – 12 Years

Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements 2006